

128 A general index is included, but for easy reference a detailed list of contents is given at the beginning.

128 For the sake of consistency I have, with few exceptions, followed
104 the orthography adopted by Professor Evans-Pritchard. The full range of phonetic symbols has not been used, but the Nilotic *ch* or *sh* sound is rendered as *c*—a common convention even in administrative documents—and *gh* stands for the phonetic *ɣ*. Other forms of spelling are taken from *A Nuer-English Dictionary*, by Fr. J. Kiggen. After initial explanation, I have often had to employ Nuer terms in later passages without further definition simply because such terms have a complicated meaning for which there is no succinct English translation. To assist the reader a glossary of these terms is included among the appendixes.

Note on Cattle Terminology

231 Nuer law is principally concerned with rights and claims in cattle,
104 and it will be as well, even at this early stage, to give some description of Nuer cattle terms. Cattle are referred to generally as *ghok*. The *ghok thunge*—the indemnity paid to a dead man's kin by his slayer—simply means the 'cattle of compensation', the *ghok gwande* are the 'father's cattle', i.e. the father's portion of bridewealth. A single cow is *yang*, though *yang* is often used indiscriminately to describe all sizes of female cattle. A heifer is specifically *nac*, a young female animal which has not yet calved, but may be expected to do so in the near future. A smaller female calf is *dou*. An entire bull is *tut*, the stud bull being referred to as *tut wec*, 'the bull of the herd'. An ox is *thak* if it is full-grown, all other bull-calves being *ruath*. Cattle obviously have their relative value according to sex and size. A full-grown ox (*thak*) is often said to be worth a cow-calf (*dou*); a pregnant heifer (*nac me liac*) or a pregnant cow (*yang me liac*) is clearly worth more than a similar animal which is not in calf. A barren cow (*yang me but*) is useless except for meat or sacrifice but is often considered the equivalent of a medium size ox.

[585] Conventional claims or rights (*cuong*) are usually specified: for example, the *yang kwoth gwande*, 'the cow of the father's spirit', is one specific item included in the *ghok gwande*, the bride's father's portion of her bridewealth. This is a single animal. The *yang gwande*, another item in the father's portion, however, is usually a cow and its calf, though when referring to the claim, the calf may not be specifically mentioned. At the same time these terms may be subject to agreement between the two parties concerned and not to a strict legal interpretation. Thus, though he may point out that the *yang gwande* should consist of a cow and calf, a father may well be prepared to accept something less than this.

In giving judgement, a Nuer court will almost always specify the